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ABSTRACT

By policy of the Federal Republic of Germany, compulsory school attendance applies to exceptional children as well as to children in regular classroom environments. This policy also allows for children with disabilities, whenever possible, to have joint instruction in regular classrooms. Part 1 of this report summarizes the current special school system in West Germany, giving particular emphasis to physical and mental limitations as standards of admission to schools for the blind, the visually- impaired, the deaf, the hearing-impaired, the mentally handicapped, the physically handicapped, the educationally subnormal, the speech-impaired, the behaviorally disturbed, and children undergoing prolonged hospitalization. Each school situation is defined and particular efforts and problems of each area are discussed. Early promotive measures adopted by the states are described as is vocational training available for the handicapped. Difficulties experienced by foreign students, both in special and regular classes, is mentioned. Part 2 of this report deals with responses to special schooling by teacher unions, political parties, state ministries, and parent associations. Selected comments all stress priority given to social integration of special school students into family, professions, society, and into normal and vocational school situations. This priority is encouraging. (CBC)

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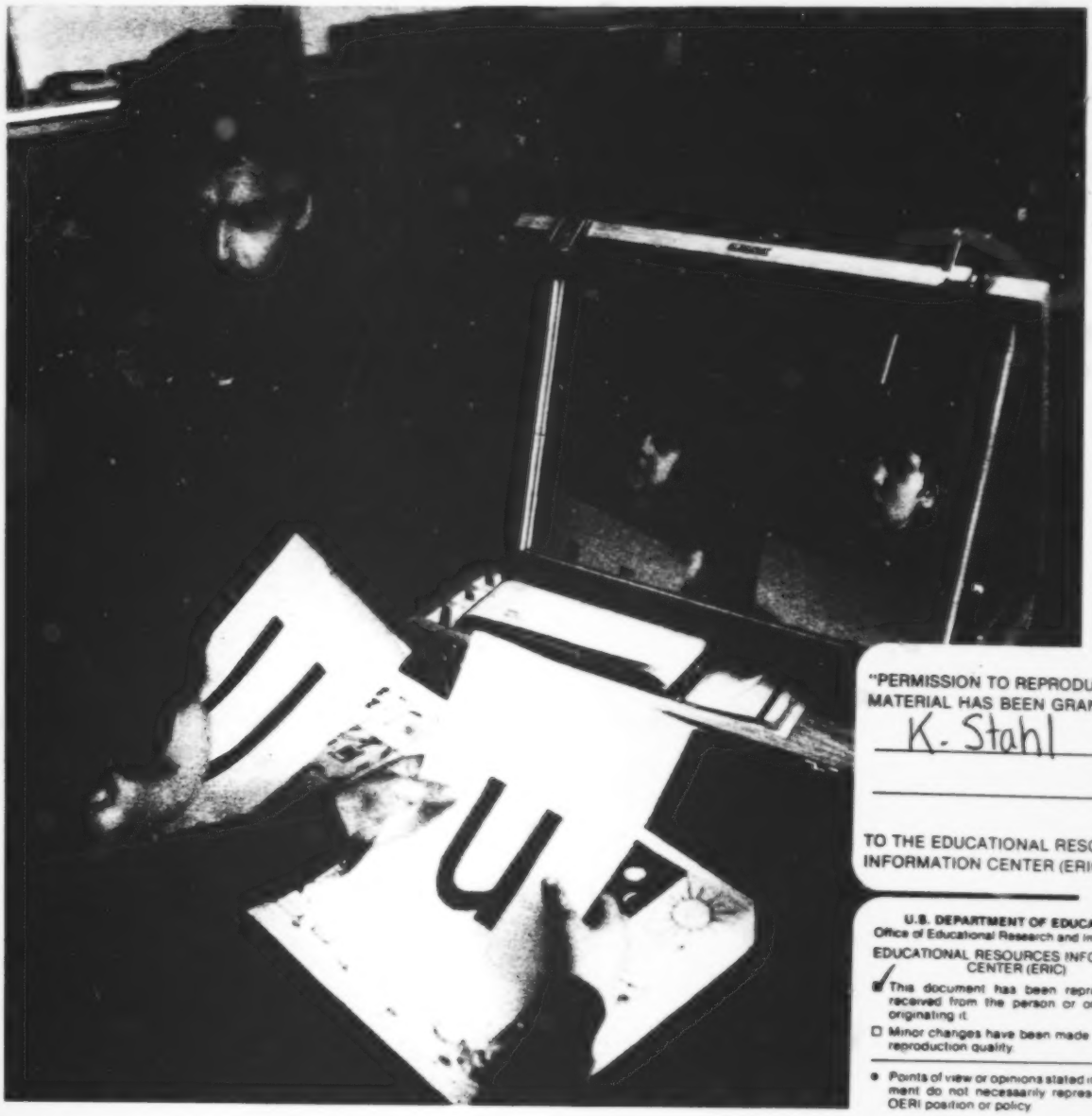

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THE SPECIAL SCHOOL SYSTEM IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

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Cover photo: School for children with impaired speech

Photo: Prändl

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THE SPECIAL SCHOOL SYSTEM IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Introduction

The federal states *(Bundesländer)* enjoy cultural sovereignty in the Federal Republic of Germany. Consequently, they are responsible for school legislation.

As far as special schools are concerned (special schools are called *Sonderschulen* in German), developments have been largely synchronised over the last two decades or so. This results from an agreement reached by the Education Ministers Conference (known as Standing Conference of the Education ministers of the Federal States in the Federal Republic of Germany [KMK] in German) in 1960, and contained in a report on policy in respect of special schools: the agreement was extended by the "Recommendations on the Pattern of the Special School System" in 1972. The legal basis is also more or less identical in all the federal states. The right to suitable education and training is laid down in the individual constitutions of the federal states and set out in the various educational laws.

All children in the Federal Republic of Germany, who have reached their sixth birthday, are obliged by law to attend school. As a general rule, compulsory school attendance lasts nine or ten years, depending on the federal state concerned. The first four (or, in some cases, six) years of schooling take place at a primary school *(Grundschule)* and the remainder in a secondary school *(weiterführende Schule)*. On completion of Class 4 (or 6), pupils go their various ways, i. e. to main school *(Hauptschule)* for five (and, in some states, six) years, to intermediate school *(Realschule)* for six years or to grammar school *(Gymnasium)* for nine. The universally compulsory attendance of school on a daily basis for nine years is followed by three years compulsory attendance at a vocational school *(Berufsschule)* on a part-time basis, once a week as a rule. The rest of the week is taken up with training of a practical nature, usually in a firm.

Compulsory school attendance applies just as much to handicapped children and adolescents as it does to "normal" children. The policy in all the federal states is for handicapped children – wherever possible – to have joint instruction with non-handicapped children. Special schools, or special educationally promotive measures, however, are provided wherever they are considered necessary.

THE PROMOTION OF HANDICAPPED CHILDREN IN SPECIAL SCHOOLS

Special schools have their own individual commitments. They are designed to provide education and training for children and young persons who are capable of attending school, but who – because of their particular physical, mental or psychic affliction – are not able to enjoy such facilities at a normal school. Special schools are divided up into categories relating to the particular requirements of the pupils concerned and operate on special educational principles.

Special schools exist in the following categories:

- schools for the blind
- schools for the deaf
- schools for the mentally handicapped
- schools for the physically handicapped
- schools for the educationally subnormal
- schools for pupils with impaired hearing
- schools for pupils with impaired vision
- schools for pupils with impaired speech
- schools for pupils with behavioural disturbances (or schools providing corrective education)
- schools for children undergoing prolonged hospitalisation

Whenever special schools' particular responsibilities call for boarding facilities for pupils or whenever the distance between parental home and the special school in question makes it difficult to comply with statutory school attendance requirements, residential accommodation – including meals and family-like care – is provided.

As a result of school developments, the percentage of special school pupils per year group is now as follows:

Blind	0.015%
Deaf	0.05 %
Mentally Handicapped	0.6 %
Physically Handicapped	0.3 %
Educationally subnormal	3.0 %
Impaired Hearing	0.18 %
Impaired Vision	0.1 %
Impaired Speech	0.5 %
Behaviour Disorders	1.0 %

It should be pointed out that not all handicapped children spend their entire scholastic career at special schools. The schools for pupils with impaired speech, for instance, are so designed that they are only attended by children of primary school age. In schools for pupils with behavioural problems, the latter are not usually admitted until they have completed their tenth birthday.

Pupils at schools for the blind

Schools for the blind are attended by children and adolescents who are unable to see at all, or by those who, despite optical correction, are still obliged to behave (in the major areas of life) as if they were blind. This is usually in those cases where the acuity of vision does not exceed 1/50 of the norm, or if this is not so, where other sight defects of the same degree exist. Without special assistance, such pupils cannot find their way around in a strange environment and have to obtain information about the surroundings (which normal children achieve visually) mainly through their senses of hearing and touch. Social interaction is made more difficult. Learning processes – in which visual perception plays an important part – have to take place with the assistance of specific aids and methods, e. g. braille.

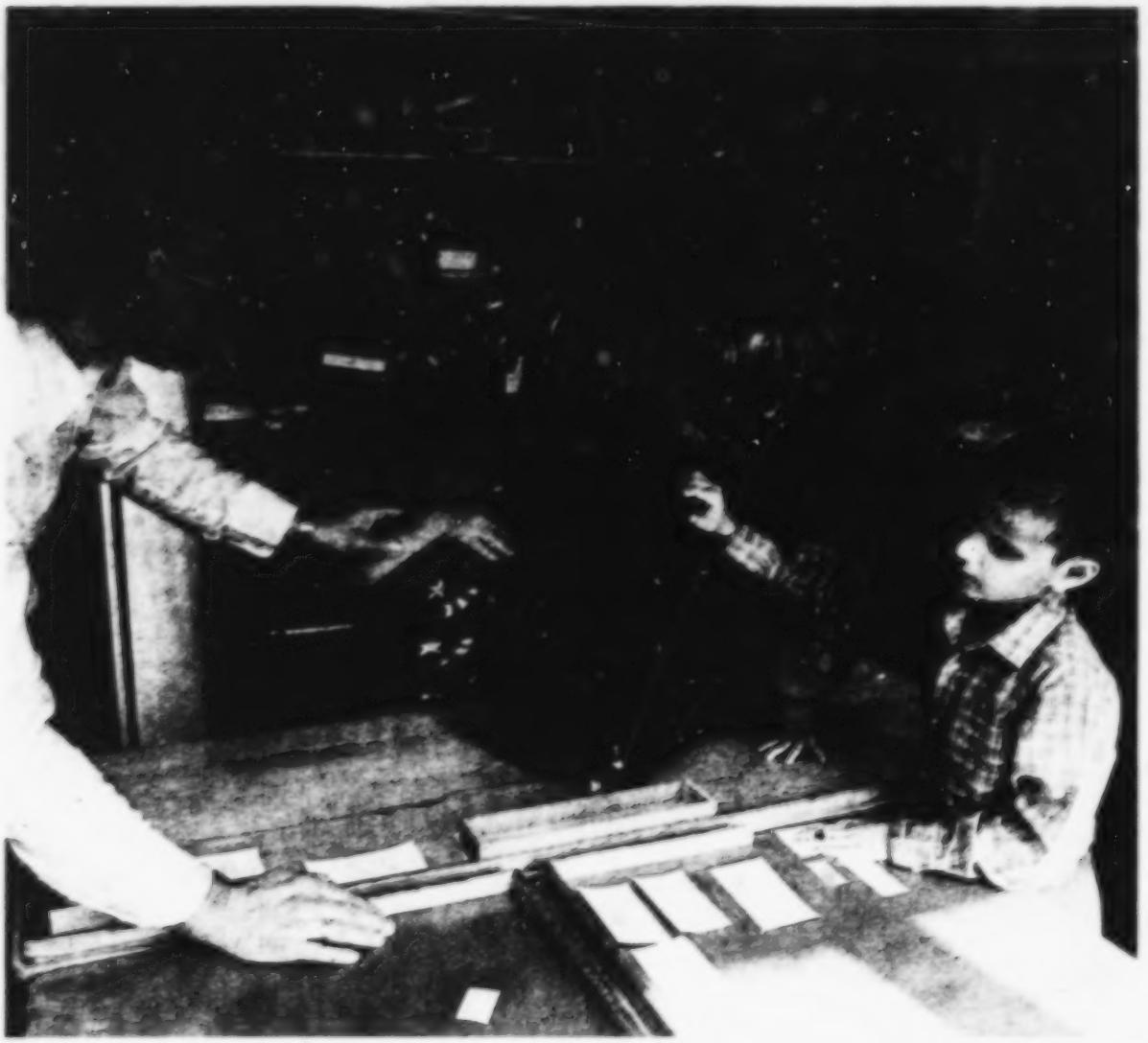
Schools for the blind also take children and young

persons with severely impaired vision, i. e. with an acuity of vision between 1/20 and 1/50 of the norm, or when their eyesight has other defects to the same degree of severity. As a general rule, these pupils are dependent on blind instruction media and methods in educational and training situations and aids for the blind in professional and daily life. Since eyesight not only depends on physical and physiological factors, pupils are also admitted to schools for the blind if their eyesight (because of central disorders) is more impaired than opthalmological reports suggest.

Even though such criteria are given full consideration, in individual cases the decision as to which type of school would be most educationally promotive is only taken after a prolonged period of observation

Pupils at schools for children with impaired vision

Schools for pupils with impaired vision admit those who, because of their affliction, cannot be satisfactorily educated in normal schools.



School for the blind *Photo: Prandl*

Pupils in this category are, as a general rule, those who, despite corrective glasses, but no other form of artificial aid, have a central acuity of vision of 1/3 or less in the better or both eyes, or whose eyesight, despite better acuity of vision, is impaired to a serious degree in some other way.

As far as educational requirements are concerned, pupils are divided into two groups according to the following criteria:

1. Pupils with reduced eyesight of 1/3 to 1/20 of the norm

2. Pupils with severely impaired eyesight of less than 1/3 to 1/50 of the norm

Schools for pupils with impaired eyesight are attended primarily by those with eyesight between 1/3 and 1/20 of the norm.

In individual cases, the prescribed limits may be exceeded or fallen short of.

Basically, the levels of vision laid down must be regarded as orientation values for the establishment of limits. Impaired eyesight can also exist in areas which cannot be accurately measured, e. g. sensitivity to light.

Even in cases of reduced vision of 1/20 of the norm, cognitive, psychomotoric and socio-emotional behaviour is, as a rule, influenced by visual stimuli. In those cases where eyesight is 1/3 of the norm or less, the absorption and processing of optically experienced information are extremely difficult.

Non-visual stimuli grow in importance for pupils whose visual powers are less than 1/20 of the norm: it calls for special forms of teaching and learning. Even so, with the help of technical and learning aids, all possibilities must be fully exploited to prompt pupils to employ existing powers of vision and to improve them through constant practice. The choice of the most suitable type of school for pupils who have other handicaps (in addition to impaired eyesight) must be made on an individual basis.

Pupils at schools for the deaf

Schools for the deaf admit children who have been deaf from birth, or those who became deaf before learning to speak. Children are also accepted who became deaf at a later date but who do not possess anything like the same faculty of speech of similary-aged children, and those with remnants of hearing whose speech development (despite the use of aural aids from a very early age) clearly indicates that they are not equal to the speech requirements at schools for children with impaired hearing.

Children who are both educationally subnormal and mentally handicapped are taught in special classes or departments at schools for the deaf.

Pupils at schools for children with impaired hearing

Children and young persons are admitted to schools catering for impaired hearing if their powers of hearing are affected in such a way that, even with hearing aids, they cannot be educated at normal schools in accordance with their abilities and who need special teaching processes and educative measures to overcome or reduce their disability.

Children and young persons who, whilst or after learning to speak, suffer a loss of hearing of more than 90 dB in the frequency range above 500 cps (children or young persons who have become deaf), are admitted to schools for impaired hearing if they do not receive promotive educational measures in line with their ability at a normal school and if their speech can only be developed with the special aids available at schools for pupils with defective hearing.

Children and young persons who, because of their hearing disorder, are unable to learn speech by auditive means – even when technical hearing aids are used – are admitted to schools for the deaf.

If there are doubts about whether a pupil with defective hearing should be admitted to a school for the deaf or a school for impaired hearing, he or she is admitted to the latter initially.

Children and young persons with additional handicaps are admitted to a school for impaired hearing if the audio-oral disorder determines the handicap as a whole and if they can receive the most effective educative promotion at such a

school. Border-line cases must be given special consideration to establish which sort of school would be most beneficial for the handicapped child in question.

The procedure whereby children are admitted to a school for impaired hearing or transferred from such a school to another school is laid down in regulations issued by the federal state in question.

Pupils at schools for the mentally handicapped

Mental disablement usually results from damage to the central nervous system during or after birth. In some cases, social factors such as extreme hospitalisation, can lead to mental disablement.

Mentally handicapped children are conspicuous by peculiarities in their cognitive and emotional absorption, processing and storage processes, expressive behaviour, motoricity and verbal and non-verbal communication.

The combination of these features leads to impaired development of cognitive and emotional abilities, to extensive disorder of the communicative area as well as marked deficits in the psychomotoricity. Consequently, a mentally handicapped child is continually affected from several angles.

Basically, all mentally handicapped children, regardless of the manner and severity of their disablement, must be included in the promotive education programme. The learning circumstances must be taken into full account in each case when planning and organising promotive measures.

School for the deaf *Photo: Prändl*

Schools for the mentally handicapped are designed for pupils whose learning behaviour and stage of development are considerably below what may be expected as far as age is concerned: this means that they cannot receive sufficient promotive help at a school for the educationally subnormal.

Differing degrees of learning ability and different types of learning behaviour can be established according to the varying extent of the mental disablement. Even so, they must not be regarded as inalterable. By applying suitable measures designed to stimulate and improve learning behaviour, great progress is possible (relatively speaking) during the course of a (commensurate) promotive education programme.

The learning behaviour of handicapped pupils is characterised, first and foremost, by the direct relationship of learning interests and basic requirements and the close association of what has been learned with the original learning situation. Over and above this, a certain amount of ability to organise assignments independently and low-level spontaneity in respect of certain learning tasks may be assumed.

In isolated cases, occasional, outstanding ability exists in some areas, and marked deficits in others.

Pupils at schools for the physically handicapped

In the venacular, physical disablement is automatically linked with restricted movement and specific organic damage. The basic scholastic requirements for pupils and the responsibilities of schools for the physically handicapped cannot be described in such terms and medical expressions such as cerebral motoric disturbance, myopathia, malformation of inner organs etc. For the educative promotion of such pupils it is important to know whether the restriction of movement or organic defects also influence cognitive, emotional and social development. Problems in psychomotoric, emotional, social and cognitive development can result from cerebral motoric disturbances, myopathia, malformations, paraplegia and other defects. Disorders, retardation and deficits in locomotion, in dealing with work materials or the completion of school and other assignments can occur.

These effects justify special promotive requirements. If these requirements cannot be satisfactorily fulfilled at normal or other special schools, this implies the necessity to participate in the special educative measures provided by schools for the physically disabled. The promotive requirements of physically handicapped pupils cannot be described in general terms since the situation as a whole in regard to each pupil determines the individual promotive needs in each case.

School for the mentally handicapped *Photo: Prändl*

Schools for the physically handicapped provide special promotive programmes for pupils

- who require help and nursing care to a considerable extent, e. g. pupils with acute cerebral motoric disturbances (severe tetraplegia) who are dependent on others for basic daily necessities;
- whose emotional and social development has still not reached the stage where they could be taught in a group over lengthy periods. This can occur as the result of severe general development disorders or multiple disablement, or as the result of serious social disturbances in the

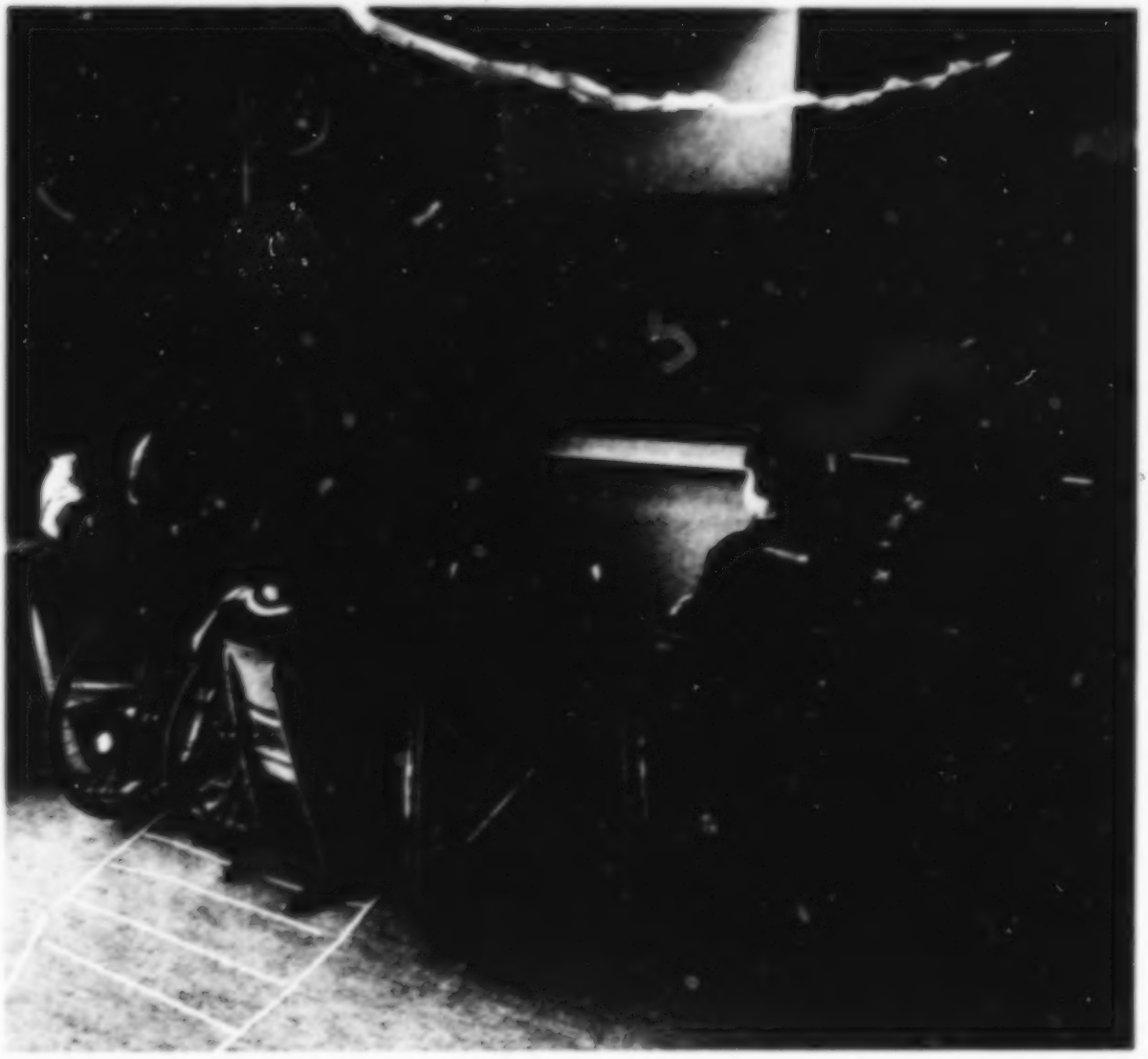
case of minor motoric restriction, e. g. restless, maladjusted, physically handicapped children;

- whose maximum stress level has been greatly reduced as the result of a serious handicap or a severe organic disorder which only allows them to take part in instruction for part of the time.

Pupils at schools for the educationally subnormal

Children and adolescents are regarded as *lernbehindert*, i. e. as having learning problems, if they are considerably handicapped for a prolonged period as far as learning is concerned, who deviate quite markedly age-wise from standard achievement and behavioural levels and, despite the special learning assistance provided in primary and main schools, cannot (or not satisfactorily) receive educative promotion measures to meet their requirements.

Educationally subnormal children (also called "slow learners") are distinguished, first and fore-



School for the physically handicapped *Photo: Prändl*

most, by their reduced level of learning achievement. This is, as a rule, linked with a measurable, undeniable intelligence deficiency. Handicapped learning is not always manifest as an overall lack of learning ability; it is apparent very often in a series of learning difficulties which emerge when pupils are faced with specific tasks which include less restricted learning ability in other areas and compensating learning deficits. An underdevelopment of the cognitive and verbal functions, in social behaviour and differentiation in emotionality are, as a rule, identifiable.

Apart from the learning handicap, which has an extensive and lengthy effect on learning, there is also a broad area of learning disturbances. The transitions are fluid. Learning disturbances can turn into learning handicaps through unfavourable interaction. In the case of such "generalised learning disturbances", extensive and lengthy learning failure can emerge – but with different behaviour and achievement structures. Generalised learning disturbances (in the sense of a learning handicap) can only be assumed if there is evidence of extensive and prolonged learning failure. This is not the case vis-à-vis many scholastic learning difficulties. Timely educational intervention and promotive measures in primary school can decisively thwart the emergence, development and consolidation of learning disturbances.

Accordingly, it is possible to distinguish between two main groups of educationally subnormal children – whereby the combination of varying factors must often be reckoned with:

Group 1: Educationally subnormal with *marked intelligence deficit*
Children in this category display considerable learning and achievement failure of a general nature: in general, intelligence attainment is reduced. Social behaviour does not correspond with age, i. e. underdeveloped.

Group 2: Educationally subnormal with *generalised learning disturbances*
- because of neurological malfunction or constitutional weaknesses. In the case of these pupils the lack of uniformity in their learning and achievement behaviour is conspicuous. Their intelligence level is often only slightly reduced (not all). Circumscribed deficits, weaknesses or irregularities are prodominant and have developed to an overall pattern of learning and achievement pattern disproportionate to their age with the passing of time.

- with psychoreactive basis and of socio-cultural nature.
  Problematic circumstances in the family or children's home, in school or their environment have actuated emotional disturbances, learning handicaps and abnormal behaviour in these children and led to general or lasting failure in school. Lack of stimulation results in particular speech and behaviour patterns, mental underdevelopment, a processing style inappropriate to age and motivational handicaps. As a result, such pupils are no longer equal to the requirements of normal schools although their intellectual performance level is not always appreciably impaired.

Pupils at schools for children with impaired speech

Pupils with impaired speech are often so afflicted because of disturbances in the areas of motoricity or social and learning behaviour, as well as because of an isolated failure or marked susceptibility in the speech area.

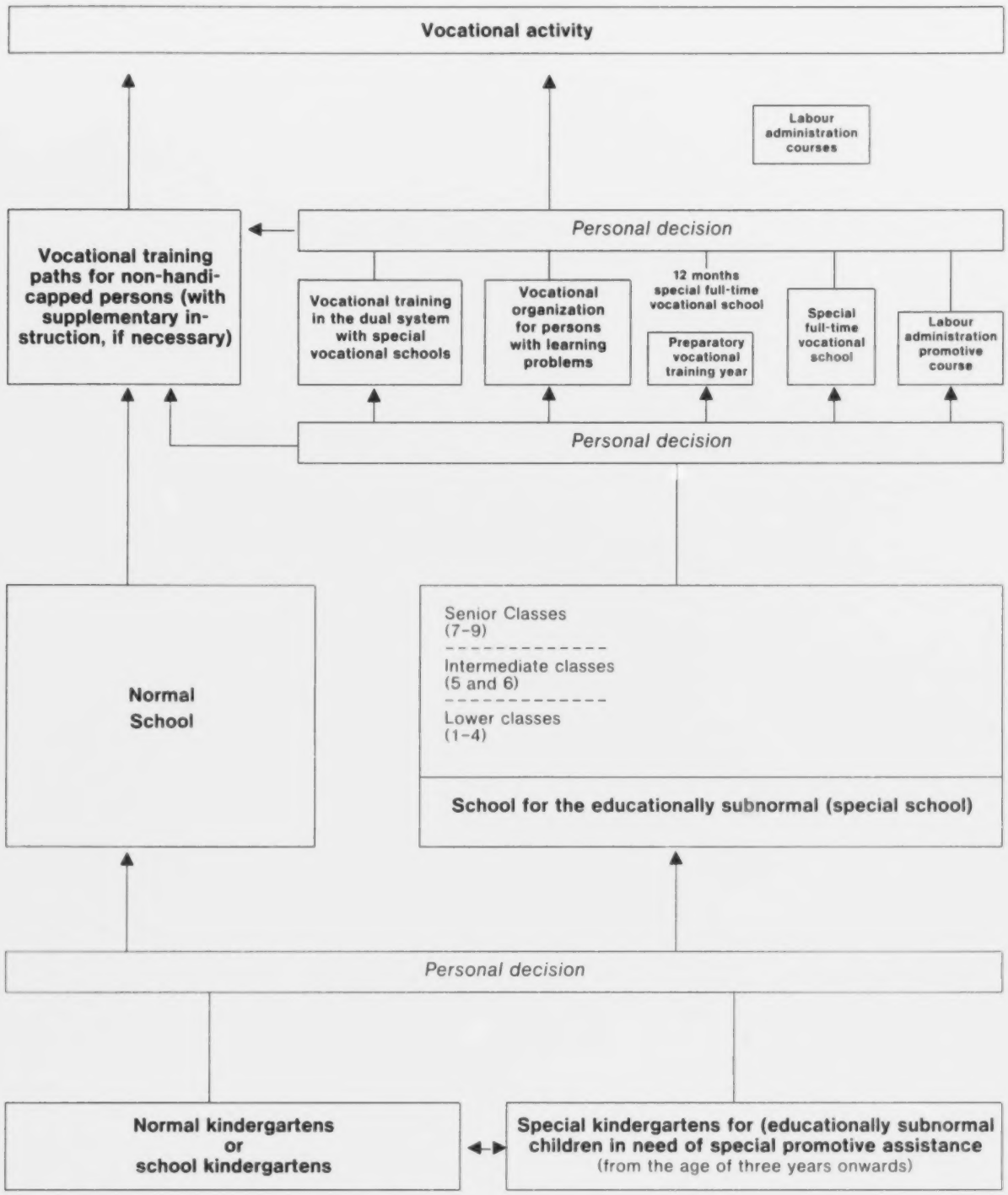
Children with impaired speech are considered eligible for special school education when their handicap is so serious that they cannot be adequately assisted by measures concomitant with school education or by a course of treatment for a limited period.

As a general rule, handicaps of this nature represent marked underdevelopment of speech with symptoms of multiple or universal stammering and/or dysgrammatism. It may be disorders in trained speech acquired at a early age (phasia, dysphasia) or central handicaps in speech development (audimutism, acute agnosia). Grave speech impediments can also result from morbid changes in the speech organs.

The number of children attending schools for impaired speech can be considerably reduced by intensive preschool and speech therapeutical measures (school-concomitant).

Pupils with impaired hearing or vision, with physi-

Example of school and training paths for handicapped children and young persons – Special school promotive measures for educationally-subnormal children and young persons


Vocational activity
Labour administration courses
Personal decision
Vocational training paths for non-handicapped persons (with supplementary instruction, if necessary)
Vocational training in the dual system with special vocational schools
Vocational organization for persons with learning problems
12 months special full-time vocational school
Preparatory vocational training year
Special full-time vocational school
Labour administration promotive course
Personal decision
Normal School
Senior Classes (7–9)
Intermediate classes (5 and 6)
Lower classes (1–4)
School for the educationally subnormal (special school)
Personal decision
Normal kindergartens or school kindergartens
Special kindergartens for (educationally subnormal children in need of special promotive assistance (from the age of three years onwards)

cal, learning or mental handicaps who have speech defects usually attend the relative schools. Speech therapy measures are also provided at these schools.

Pupils with only slight impairment of speech are, as a rule, not admitted to schools providing education for children with speech handicaps. They take part in normal school instruction and receive concomitant therapeutic treatment.

Pupils are transferred from schools for children with impaired speech to other special schools if the concepts and measures of the latter's promotive measures seem to promise better results.

Pupils at schools for pupils with behaviourial disturbances (Schools providing corrective education)

Assistance inside and outside school is provided for children and young persons whose conspicuous behaviour, conditioned by development and situation, is readily identifiable but which cannot be regarded as consolidated, interacting behaviourial disorders.

Special educative assistance is necessary at schools for children with behaviourial disturbances if the symptoms of the disorder cannot be overcome by general educational and instructional means or by ambulatory help because of their variety, duration, incidence or intensity.

Physically, mentally or sensorially handicapped pupils, who also suffer from maladjusted behaviour, are not admitted to schools for children with behaviourial disorders as a rule. Relative measures are adopted for them at the special school concerned.

The combination of disturbed emotionality and social conspicuousness occurs quite frequently. Excessive agressiveness, lack of control and unbridled emotional manifestations become apparent. On the other hand, psychosocially disturbed children can timidly withdraw, shut themselves away, remain passive or be generally inhibited. This results in the emergence of isolation/regression and resignation symptoms – in addition to agressive reactions.

Inner tension and problems – as well as organic impairments – can manifest themselves in disorders and disturbances, e. g. bed-wetting, bed-soiling, dietary disorders, headaches, nausea, twitching, gastric disorders, somnipathy, vegatative over-reaction, increased susceptibility to illnesses, thumb-sucking, nail-biting, generally excessive motoric activity.

Even in the case of average or above-average intelligence, the scholastic achievement level of behaviourally disturbed pupils is frequently poor because they can only be motivated to learn occasionally – or not at all. There is an increased incidence of lack of concentration failure in particular learning and examination situations, forgetfulness, unpunctuality and untidiness.

Pupils at schools for the sick

Children of school age and juveniles, who are hospitalised because of an illness of some duration, can receive school instruction within the limits of what the doctors consider is acceptable for the patient. On principle, hospital schools are anxious for pupils from all forms of school to continue their education. In this connection they have two aims:

On being restored to health, pupils should be able to take part in lessons in the class they attended before their illness. Instruction in hospital should also help young patients to master the sickness situation by helping them to cope with boredom and resignation, thus having a therapeutic effect. If, however, acute, existential problems stand in the way, achievement-oriented instruction for such sick pupils only enjoys limited justification and offers little prospect of success.

The structure of a hospital school and the manner in which teaching is undertaken depends largely on the type of hospital such scholastic activity takes place in. Despite the manifold nature of the hospital system, three types can be clearly distinguished: general hospitals, recuperation and rehabilitation hospitals and psychiatric and psychosomatic clinics.

If the pupil cannot come to the hospital schoolroom, the teacher goes to his bedside. In the one sickroom he teaches a primary school child how to subtract: in the next room he teaches a grammar school girl fractions. It sometimes happens that a

young Turk is admitted and has, first of all, to learn German. Thus the teaching content taught by a hospital teacher is broadly spanned, even if it is restricted in most cases to Mathematics, German and Foreign Languages. The number of lessons received by pupils at schools for the sick amounts to 12 per week. When deciding the actual extent of such instruction, medical and educational requirements must be weighed up and taken into consideration.

To ensure that individual sick pupils can be systematically helped as much as possible, hospitals contact the school previously attended: this contact is maintained as long as the child remains in hospital. The schools are also consulted on the issuing of reports and when the question of moving up to the next class arises.

The help offered by hospital schools is not of a purely scholastic nature. Teachers can best help sick children if they think their way into the latters' situation and shape their responsibilities accordingly – responsibilities which often go far beyond those of teachers in normal schools. And what is the situation like for children in hospital?

- They are dependent; teachers must offer them opportunities to become independent.
- The children are weak, ill – often seriously ill; teachers must help them to boost their ego.

Special school: playground *Photo: Danetzki*

- Some children spend a long time in hospital; teachers must help them to organise their day.

- Children are isolated in hospital; teachers must offer them contact to the outside world.

- The children are absent from school; teachers must help them to fill in the gaps.

- Children are human beings with intelligence and feelings; teachers must help to ensure that these do not become debilitated.

Seriously ill children, in particular, gain new hope when the hospital teacher comes to their bedside for the first time: "I can't be so ill after all!" This renewed courage can have an extremely positive effect on the success of treatment by triggering healing powers.

Early promotive measures

Children in their infancy or early childhood who, following a medical diagnosis, have a possibly burgeoning handicap, can receive special pedagogical care at this early age at the wish of the parents via advice centres which are, in some cases, located in special schools. The purpose of these advice centres is to diagnose handicaps at as early an age as possible and to overcome or prevent them. In addition, the parents concerned receive advice and are given guidance on how they should deal with their handicapped child.

These special pedagogical advice centres are part of the overall special promotive system. Experts who have undergone special pedagogical training (particularly special school teachers) work in close cooperation with educators, physical therapists and medical services at these advice centres. The assistance and promotion programme provided by the advice centres is free of charge for the parents. Promotive help for the child and advice for the parents can also be given at home within the programme of house visits.

Children who, because of their particular disablement, seem to be in need of special care before they commence school, can, with the agreement of the parents, attend special kindergartens on completion of their third birthday (after their second birthday in the case of physically handicapped children). These institutions are specialised in respect of the various types of handicap (for the blind, impaired eyesight, deaf, impaired hearing, mentally handicapped, physically handicapped, impaired speech, educationally subnormal and behavioural disorders).

The groups are looked after in small groups who are in charge of female educator *(Erzieherin)*. Special school staff also assist. On reaching the age of compulsory school attendance, each child is questioned and examined to establish whether the child is in need of the educational programme provided by a special school or whether the child can attend normal school.

Educational promotive measures

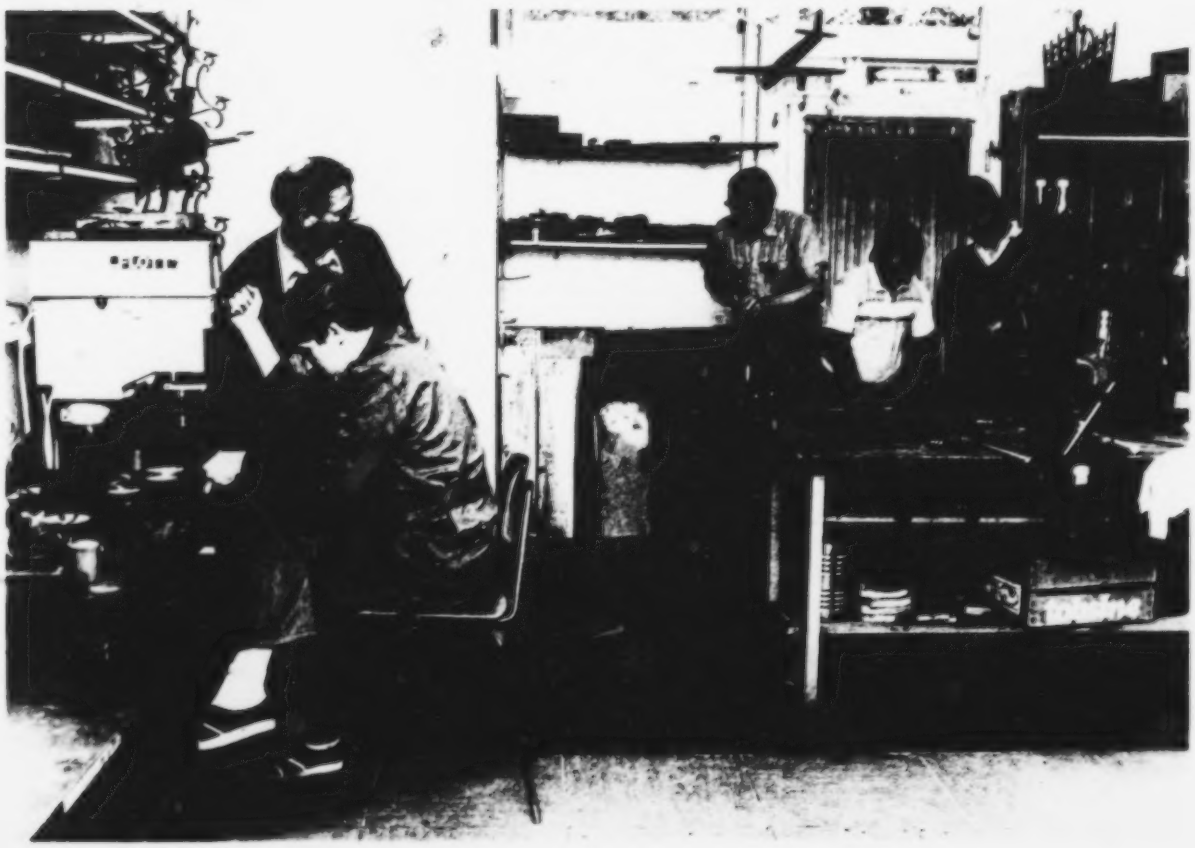
All educational courses, which the school system offers non-handicapped pupils, are available at the above-mentioned special schools, provided this is expedient vis-à-vis the disablement in question.

Vocational integration *Photo: Prändl*

Schools for children with impaired hearing, for instance, offer main school *(Hauptschule)*, intermediate school *(Realschule)* and grammar school *(Gymnasium)* educational courses. This means that pupils attending special schools can (depending on ability) acquire a main, intermediate or higher school certificate, i. e. *Abitur*. To quote a second example, schools for the physically handicapped likewise offer curricula culminating in all the final certificates which can be acquired at normal schools in the Federal Republic of Germany. These schools provide classes suited to both the physically and mentally handicapped. There is also a special department for physically disabled and educationally subnormal pupils. All other children and young persons attending schools for the physically handicapped have the opportunity of educational programmes leading to main and intermediate final certificates – as well as *Abitur*.

In other words, attendance at a special school does not mean that handicapped children and young persons are deprived of the opportunity of final secondary school certificates. On the contrary, the educational programmes at special schools are so designed for the pupils that – despite their particular handicap – they can obtain these secondary school qualifications. In this way they are enabled to avail themselves of the opportunity of qualifying for vocational training or higher educational study courses.

It goes without saying that special schools also



Special School: foreign and German children in the school workshop *Photo: Danetzki*

have the responsibility of promoting those pupils in question to a point where they can go to a normal school. A relatively large number of pupils at schools for impaired speech and those providing corrective education are transferred to normal schools – eventually. This also applies to schools for children with learning problems where quite a few likewise return to normal schools.

Numerous experimental models are trying out cooperation between primary, main and special schools; the framework conditions for joint instruction of handicapped and non-handicapped children are also being examined. All these pilot schemes are aimed at improved integration of handicapped young persons in school and society.

In recent years, care has been taken in school building programmes not to erect special schools separately from normal schools. The best way to cater for the social integration of handicapped pupils is to have as little segregation as possible – both in school transport and in school. The independence enjoyed by the special school system is regarded by all concerrned as indispensable because of performance level in the classroom, general upbringing and therapeutic requirements. Existing cooperative models between normal and special schools are to be increased in the next few years to make full allowance for the social integration aspects.

Vocational training
for handicapped young persons

Particular importance is attached to the vocational integration of handicapped young persons in the Federal Republic of Germany. This is why special attention is paid to preparatory vocational training in special schools. Instructional guidance in choice of occupation is provided at special schools in close cooperation with the careers advice service at job centres. This is intended to equip all handicapped young persons with vocational orientation.

The vocational training system offers a number of promotive opportunities by means of which handicapped qoung persons are basically given the chance to train for a recognised profession. In the last ten years, for instance, 10,000 training places have been created for handicapped young persons in *Berufsbildungswerke* (special vocational training centres) which provide intensive, concomitant promotive measures. The *Berufsbildungswerke* offer handicapped young persons residential facilities – wherever necessary. In this way a move has been made to ensure that handicapped young persons from sparsely populated areas are given the opportunity of trade training.

Although those leaving schools for the educationally subnormal (learning problems) cannot be trained by a firm – but who do not require the intensive training provided at *Berufsbildungswerke* – they have the opportunity of a training course under the terms of the Programme for the Promotion of Disadvantaged Young Persons sponsored by the Federal Ministry of Education and Science in Bonn. This programme seeks to overcome existing difficulties by means of supporting instructional courses and social-pedagogical assistance to a point where training can (wherever possible) be continued in a firm on completion of the first year of apprenticeship.

The opportunity to train according to special regulations exists for young persons who, on account of the severity of their disablement, cannot be trained for a recognised career – despite current promotive measures.

On leaving their special schools (at about the age of 20 or so), mentally handicapped young persons are offered a place in a Workshop for the Disabled where relatively simple activity is performed.

Responsible bodies for special schools

The responsible authorities for special schools are local authorities or rural district councils, provided the schools are not run by an independent authority, i. e. private schools. Most special schools – except those for the educationally subnormal – are all-day schools.

Whenever compliance with the law regarding compulsory schooling means attendance of a special school, those pupils concerned can, with the agreement of parents or guardians, be accommodated in a hostel or with a family. Because of the small number of pupils involved, all deaf and almost all blind children attend special schools with boarding facilities. The pupils can go home

every weekend. The homeward journey is on Friday afternoon, the return journey to school on Monday morning.

School costs

Attendance at a state special school incurs no expense for parents. The costs involved in the necessary conveying of pupils by public transport, in school buses or – if needs be – by taxi are assumed by the federal state authorities in each case.

If handicapped children are admitted to special schools with a boarding annexe, the federal state concerned assumes all costs for the running of the school (teaching and learning materials, maintenance of buildings, catering and staff costs), including boarding costs. The parents are only obliged to bear the home-saving element. On average, they pay about DM 150 a month towards the boarding expenses. If the children are at private special schools, the parents have to pay the boarding costs in full. Under the terms of the Federal Social Assistance Law, however, they can apply for part of these costs to be defrayed by the Social Assistance service.

Foreign pupils

Foreign pupils experience difficulties more than often in the German education system. If they are handicapped or their learning ability is so impaired that they make a very poor showing at a normal school, they are transferred to a special school. The procedure for establishing whether these pupils are in need of remedial education or not is basically determined by legal and administrative regulations emanating from educational legislation in the individual federal states.

When starting school, foreign children experience the break with their way of life hitherto much more acutely than their young German fellow-pupils of the same age. This is especially true if they have had little or no time to be together with German children in the preschool period.

These foreign children only get to know the structures of the host country via the family filter. They grow up in a mixed-cultural family which, on the strength of continued cultural contacts, does not contain clear-cut native (homeland) or foreign (host country) elements. Parents, older brothers and sisters and TV increasingly introduce various aspects of the German system of values into family life. The degree to which these culturally foreign values are allowed to penetrate family life varies greatly, however, and depends on how serious the intention is to return home and how closely the family is linked with the religious and cultural traditions of the homeland. Frequently, the effort is made to counteract exposure to "foreign" culture by marked emphasis of the national culture – in a move to prevent changes in their own sense of values and to underscore national indentity.

The identity of foreign pupils who have grown up in their own family – manifest most of all in the traditional allocation of roles and the "sense of values" – is constantly questioned in German schools. As a result of this cultural change, the behaviour of foreign children is much more uncertain and lacking in orientation compared with similarly-aged German children.

Apart from language difficulties, it is primarily problems of orientation which beset foreign pupils – rather than learning and performance in school. This can subsequently develop into marked educational and behaviourial difficulties.

The socialisation process outside the family has already commenced for foreign children before they come to Germany and have to start school. The encounter with a foreign culture interrupts this socialisation process – the turbulence of which increases as the contrast between the two cultures becomes more pronounced. Foreign pupils are faced with the problem of having to learn a foreign language in order to complete their school education and begin their vocational training.

The change of scene can result in failure in the classroom, occasioned initially by a lack of knowledge of the German language or a general education backlog – conditioned by the attendance of two differing school systems.

There are also those among foreign children who display general performance failure at school because of naturally limited learning ability. The special social and educational situation of foreign pupils exacerbates the problems of a general lack

of scholastic achievement, but play only a very minor role in the emergence of such problems initially.

Apart from this group of foreign pupils (whose poor performance in school is actuated by considerable and prolonged impairment of their personal learning process), generalised learning disturbances are the reason for outstanding failure in school in many of the cases.

These generalised disturbances on the part of foreign pupils can partly stem from their particular social and educational situation and the resultant difficulties experienced in school.

Compared with their German classmates, foreign pupils have to cope with a much greater number of stress factors. The latter – which are "typical" of foreign pupils – not only include pronounced failure in scholastic learning: they also include – additionally – social misbehaviour, not to mention conspicuous (abnormal) behaviour and behaviourial disorders.

Social uncertainty in their own or host country (alternating points of reference in their own and host country, unsure status, uncertain future prospects, repatriation exspectations) can be just as much the reason as a change of familiar cultural background, incorrect upbringing by parents (who have become uncertain themselves through foreign cultural influences and stigmatisation of strange, new surroundings).

Not infrequently, problems of identity can arise because of competitive elements in their native and foreign environments (growth of a "mixed" or "sub" culture) as well as superannuation, excessive stress and demands through instruction in the mother tongue and help with homework.

As far as foreign pupils are concerned – who have to be transferred to special schools because education promotion (help) in normal schools offers little hope of success – it is the task of special schools to assist these pupils to a point where they can be transferred to normal schools at the appropiate time. This happens to an encouraging degree. As soon as foreign handicapped children have to rely on the assistance of special schools because of their particular disablement, all the facilities of the special school system – including vocational training – are available to them.

POLITICAL ASPECTS

Political parties, ministries, teachers and parents associations on the subject of promotive assistance for handicapped children and juveniles

Although, strictly speaking, promotive assistance for handicapped children and young persons, and life-long support for those requiring it, is not a subject for party-political differences, all political groupings in the Federal Republic of Germany represented in the German Bundestag have committed themselves to this humanitarian task.

Since, of course, institutional measures are essential for the promotion of handicapped persons, and, if needs be, life-long help, all those concerned in the specialised discussions are striving to optimize the current state of development in the system providing promotion and help.

The following article concerns itself, in particular, with the further development of the educational promotion of handicapped children and juveniles in schools.

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In order to find out the ideas on this subject on the part of those involved, the author of this article approached the political parties represented in the German Bundestag, the education ministries and senators in the federal states, as well as professional teachers associations, and asked them for their comments.

The *Bundesvereinigung Lebenshilfe*, an organisation boasting of more than 100,000 members (parents and interested public figures), was asked to speak on behalf of parents.

Even if the comments made vary greatly, they do offer a constructive picture of existing possibilities for further development and the aims being striven for.

The political parties on the subject of special schools

In the opinion of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), "a clear distinction must be made between the measures contained in the policy towards foreign nationals and points of departure in regard to special school education. Language problems and possible resultant difficulties of integration into the class must not be hastily classified as a learning handicap".

The Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) states that "schools must open their doors to those groups, in particular, which, because of the special nature of the situation in the past, tended frequently to be catered for in special establishments". As far as handicapped children are concerned, every effort must be made to educate them in normal places of learning. Over and above this, "the best-possible educational facilities in adequate measure must be provided" for severely and multi-handicapped children who cannot be properly helped in normal schools.

In their "cultural programme", the Christian Social Union (CSU) demand, inter alia: intensive cooperation between special schools and other schools, improved opportunities of transferring special school pupils back to other (normal) schools, increased use of therapeutic and similar teaching aids in specials schools, improvement of vocational training, the setting up of special classes for handicapped persons at vocational schools, in which normal subject matter is taught by special instructional methods, further training for teaching staff and home instruction for children unable to attend school.

The Free Democratic Party (F.D.P.) states: "What is being done at special schools for the development of handicapped young persons deserves the highest recognition. Nevertheless, every effort should be made to remove, as far as possible, special isolating conditions and to promote handicapped children and juveniles, including those at normal educational establishments. To this end, there must be a consensus between teachers and parents."

The GREENS (Ecological Party) state in their "Federal Programme" that an adequate number of training places and jobs must be provided for handicapped persons in industry and the administration. They also call for "generous promotion of the cultural needs" of the disabled. "The mentally and physically handicapped are part of our society and must enjoy their proper place in our society. They must no longer be excluded from public life."

Federal Government Report

In its 1984 report on "The State of the Handicapped", the Federal Government states that the promotion of handicapped children and juveniles of pre-school and school age must be viewed in a markedly differentiated manner. The report states, inter alia:

"Education has a special significance for handicapped persons. On the one hand it gives them the opportunity to develop their personality on their own responsibility, and on the other, the vocational and other opportunities of handicapped children and young persons depend to a much greater measure on the quality of training and final certificates than they do for the non-handicapped. All handicapped persons must be enabled to develop their own individual learning ability and inclinations.

Sustained efforts by the federal states and the Federal Government have, since the late 1960s, resulted in a distinct improvement in the educational opportunities of handicapped children and young persons.

The Federal Government of Germany now has a well-developed and efficient special school system. Over 600 special kindergartens providing a total of 17,000 places cover all requirements; some 2,800 schools for the handicapped are educating approximately 320,000 pupils (1982 figure). In almost 500 special school kindergartens, just under 9,000 disabled children are being prepared systematically for subsequent school attendance.

Be that as it may, the usual pattern of education in special institutions at the present time has become the subject of ever increasing criticism. Special schools are often regarded as "schools for the leftovers" with reduced opportunities and, as a consequence, are rejected; the isolation of special school pupils is criticized on the grounds that it results in a hardening of prejudices towards the handicapped. In order to counter the danger of unnecessary 'protected areas' and isolating special conditions, and to put into practice the principle of 'As much promotive assistance as necessary, as much joint learning as possible', the Federal Government and the federal states have, since the early 1970s, made DM 70 million available for integrating model experiments and scientific, concomitant projects. There are, at the present time, some 40 model schemes being carried out.

Often individual care at the early assistance stage, in kindergarten and primary school, is able to compensate for the occurrence of a handicap to such an extent that subsequent transfer to a special school is no longer required. This pre-

Special School: workshop for the mentally handicapped *Photo: Danetzki*

sumes, however – except in the case of systematic promotive measures for handicapped children and those threatened by a disablement – thorough, special training for all teaching staff at normal schools and motivation to take the particular problems of the handicapped into consideration."

The attitude of the federal states *(Länder)*

The views of the federal states are of particular interest since they are responsible for education and training. The following are a few selected comments by the education ministries and education senators in various federal states:

Berlin

"Special schools and special school facilities serve, to a very great extent, the realisation of the right of handicapped children and young persons to education and training in line with their individual talent and individual achievement level.

Special schools serve scholastic and social rehabilitation. In this connection, they exercise a basic function in the integration of handicapped pupils into society. Consequently, cooperation between normal and special schools should be promoted. The permeability of the school system must be guaranteed; efforts towards integration are a binding commitment for normal and special schools."

Bremen

"The promotive assistance provided for children in special schools has been the subject of constant discussion in Bremen in recent years. Various areas of science and a number of parent initiatives regard the specialisation practised in the special school system as social isolation and recommend, i. e. demand, the joint promotion of the handicapped and the non-handicapped. It is against this background that the Bremen education authorities have issued instructions to seek possibilities of increased permeability between the different types of schools, thus reducing the isolation of handicapped pupils as much as possible in the schools area.

In this connection, it is not planned to disband special schools and introduce joint instruction for handicapped and non-handicapped pupils. Wherever feasible, special schools are to be located in the proximity of normal schools to provide the opportunity of as much close cooperation as possible. Content-wise, efforts are being made to provide special schools with possibilities of effectual activity in normal schools – in addition to their present responsibilities – and thus being able to give necessary assistance to pupils with temporary learning difficulties and avoiding the need to attend a special school. These objectives, however, reach their limits in those cases where handicapped pupils can only receive special help in special schools.

In other words, special schools will continue to fulfil their specifically special educational responsibilities to assist pupils with extensive, severe and prolonged learning difficulties. Nevertheless, they will be assigned further commitments in the way of initiation, coordination and safeguarding of promotive measures and consultative activity; this means that their range of responsibilities will have to be redefined.

The aim of all these efforts is the provision of a suitable educational programme for each and every pupil and to find the best place of learning as far as optimum, personal promotion is concerned.

The inclusion of special schools in the process of change within the education system is essential. It will help to take special schools and their pupils out of the social fringe area – regarded as a multifaceted disadvantage."

Hesse

"The main priority at the present time is the integration of handicapped children into normal schools, i. e. preventing transfer to a special school through intensive promotive help. The existing, well-developed special school system is not at issue. Handicapped children or those threatened by handicap are being cared for in normal schools in numerous projects and school experiments. At the present time, more than 200 special school teachers have been seconded lesson-wise to primary, main and grammar schools where they have prophylactic and consultative duties. Children at primary schools are being taught in 98

speech therapy classes and 30 classes for children with behaviour disorders by special school teachers. In this connection, there is no permanent segregation; the children spend most of the time in their class. Special schools supply the necessary teaching materials for children with impaired eyesight at primary schools who, because of the distance involved, cannot attend a special school catering for such handicapped children. There are technical aids for physically handicapped children which permit them to attend normal schools (including the senior classes at grammar schools, i. e. *Gymnasien*).

School experimental projects include the teaching of physically and mentally handicapped children, and blind children, at primary schools. In order to register and fully appreciate the possibilities of joint instruction for handicapped and non-handicapped children and young persons in its full breadth, the Education Committee of the Hessian Parliament conducted a hearing in September 1985 in which all concerned had the opportunity to air their opinion."

Lower Saxony

"In a move to realise the right (guaranteed in the Basic Law/Constitution) to education and training according to talent and aptitude, a differentiated system of special-educational promotion was developed, in particular, a system of special schools tailored to the various forms of disablement.

School for the mentally handicapped *Photo: Danetzki*

Apart from the basic decision to set up and further develop an efficient special school system, the fact must not be overlooked that there are also pupils who can only be satisfactorily assisted at normal schools by resorting to a mixture of special and normal educational measures.

Even if special educational help is offered at normal schools and cooperation between special and normal schools is stepped up, the required places at special schools must be reserved (under current school conditions) for those pupils whose particular promotive needs cannot be catered for at normal schools."

Rhineland-Palatinate

"Children who, because of their particular handicap, cannot (or not adequately) be given promotive care in other schools, attend a suitable special school in the Rhineland-Palatinate. This decision is made by the school authorities on the strength of a socio-educational report, and following a hearing with the parents and a medical report. Special schools can be set up for blind, deaf, mentally handicapped and physically handicapped children, for those with learning difficulties, impaired hearing, impaired eyesight, speech disorders and abnormal behaviour. Special schools provide pupils who, because of their particular disablement, cannot be adequately promoted (even with special help) in their educational career at other types of school, with final school certificates tailored to these schools or their own ability. Pupils who, because of their disablement, cannot, in the first instance, embark on a vocational training course, receive promotive vocational training to the point where they are enabled to subsequently follow a vocation-related training course or to fulfil the conditions for gainful employment. Handicapped children not accepted for normal school attendance for the time being, receive special promotive assistance at special school kindergartens.

Special schools must have a minimum of four classes: there are exceptions to this rule, however, where the residential structure provides special reasons. A programme of school experiments is trying out new methods and organisational forms in an effort to achieve more effective promotion of handicapped pupils.

This begins with preventive measures such as those contained in the school experiment 'Promotion of disturbed pupils or those threatened by disability to reduce the need to attend special school at primary level' or 'Try-out of an integrated, promotive system for pupils with abnormal behaviour in schools for primary and secondary level I'. Further schemes include the 'Integration of physically handicapped pupils into grammar school' and 'Joint instruction of handicapped and non-handicapped pupils in primary school".

Comments by parents and teachers associations

The views of parents and teachers associations on the question of correct schooling for handicapped children and young persons is also of special interest. The *Bundesvereinigung Lebenshilfe*, the largest parents association (over 100,000 members) in the Federal Republic of Germany, has taken on the task of enabling mentally handicapped persons, from birth onwards, to "enjoy a life worthy of human beings, to support the development of personality and to integrate them into society". According to a statement by this association on 6 September 1985:

"New developments in work for the disabled, changed experiences and perspectives for the families concerned have led, for some time now, to increased public discussion on the subject of 'integration'. This is dominated by efforts towards more joint possibilities of playing and learning for handicapped and non-handicapped children and juveniles. *Lebenshilfe*, via parents and experts, is also trying in many places to realise these forms of promotive help.

There are already many encouraging examples and positive findings in the kindergarten field. An increasing number of special kindergartens, for example, are offering programmes for non-handicapped children: normal kindergartens, for their part, are opening their doors to mentally handicapped children.

Developments such as this give rise to hopes, expectations and initial points of departure for a continuation of joint promotion of children of school age."

Views of the teachers union Erziehung und Wissenschaft

The trade union *Erziehung und Wissenschaft*, whose 200,000 members include teachers, social educators, therapists and scientists, champions the professional and educational interests of its members.

The teachers union *Erziehung und Wissenschaft* (GEW) states that, apart from better pay and working conditions, it is also intent, inter alia, on the following improvements and changes:

"1. Reduction of size of classes at special schools to at least the levels recommended by the Standing Conference of Education Ministers of the Federal States of the Federal Republic of Germany (KMK), or to the levels recommended by the Overall Education Plan of the Federal Government/Federal States Mixed Commission for children with learning problems (12 per class). In those cases where the numbers fall short of the recommended level, the allocation of teaching periods must be based on classes rather than pupil numbers so that instruction can take place according to timetable.

2. Reduction of these levels for classes with multi-handicapped pupils.

3. Better promotive-diagnostic procedures for foreign children: each foreign child should count as two pupils.

4. Timetable improvements, particularly by increased allocation of therapeutic, promotive and split classes, and activities.

5. Allocation of teaching lessons for diagnosis and consultation.

6. Expansion of early promotive measures.

7. Extension of further education programmes for special school teachers, social educators and therapists – with leave of absence from lessons.

8. Appointment of all unemployed special school teachers, social educators, educationalists and therapists.

The GEW wants joint instruction of handicapped and non-handicapped children and juveniles. It has called for the following:

1. Further development of existing integrative projects and experiments in the federal states with the aim of joint learning and living for handicapped and non-handicapped children and young persons.

2. The guarantee of continuing existing integrated classes at primary schools into secondary level I.

3. All schools – regardless of type – must be given an additional allocation of special teachers to prevent the segregation of handicapped pupils and those threatened by a handicap, through purposive promotive assistance and team-teaching.

Further projects should be set up with:

4. sufficient teachers' periods and reduction of class numbers,

5. special educational, therapeutic and promotive measures,

6. the services of social educators, educationalists and therapists,

7. scientic, concomitant observation and evaluation."

Views of the teachers union Bildung und Erziehung

The teachers association *Bildung und Erziehung* (VBE) has a membership of some 105,000 teachers and others working in the education field.

The VBE outlines its position as follows in regard to the matter in question:

"The VBE's Department of Education for the Handicapped is concerned with all matters connected with the special school system and follows all new considerations and development possibilities in a critically-promotive manner in this field. The focal points of the department's work are:

– to view special schools in the process of change,

- to intensify cooperation between special and normal schools, and

- to give priority to the progressive character of integration.

In this connection, the individuality of the handicapped child or young person in question determines the form of upbringing, instruction and education best-suited to him or her. These three concepts, which are all contained in the Greek *paideia*, are deliberately emphasized here. The overall concept implies that upbringing cannot be separated from education – education which is gained from proper and value-oriented instruction.

The VBE views the independence of education for the handicapped as a chance – beyond the institution of the school which, however, must, without doubt remain the central point – to arrive at special educational centres content-wise.

The change in the special school system must, accordingly, include an extension and intensification of the area of commitments – from early registration to integration into family, profession and society. The basic condition for this is also minimum agreement in respect of standardized training for special school teachers. The aim of all efforts is the social integration of the handicapped. This process begins – in the schools area – with the commitment to sensitize teachers in the various systems vis-à-vis this responsibility. This likewise includes the realisation that special schools must and can be an important stage along the path to integration.

With social integration as the objective, new or extended areas of responsibility (from early recognition to concomitant care following successful integration) will be coming the way of special education. The latter must be able to offer itself and its services in a competent manner – beyond the bounds of the school.

The contributions given above show that discussion in the Federal Republic of Germany on the best-possible promotive education for handicapped children and young persons is continuing. In this connection, the special school system, in general, is not at issue; on the contrary, the majority of those engaged in this discussion are striving for an improvement in the special education promotion system to the point where the segration of special schools is abandoned, cooperation with normal and vocational schools is sought and a transfer of special educational competence to training establishments for the non-handicapped is aimed at. This change, now in progress, will improve the chances of the handicapped and those threatened by disability in the areas of prevention and scholastic rehabilitation. The great interest shown in promotive measures for the handicapped by broad areas of those involved in the education scene, can only serve to encourage and fortify all those active in this field.